

GAO Report on Implementation of National Homeland Security Strategy

After 9/11, the President appointed Governor Tom Ridge as his national advisor for homeland security. Governor Ridge, along with staff from many Federal Agencies, state and local governments, and others such as the first responder and medical communities developed a "National Strategy for Homeland Security" which was signed by President Bush in July, 2002. I provided a summary along with a copy of the strategy document to the FLC membership at that time. Since that time a new Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has been established, significant funds have been created, and many agencies have undertaken a number of initiatives towards implementing the national strategy.

Congress tasked GAO to review the national strategy's implementation to:

1. "Determine whether its initiatives are being addressed by key department's strategic planning and implementation activities, whether the initiatives have lead agencies identified for their implementation, and whether the initiatives were being implemented in fiscal year 2004 by such agencies and
2. "Identify ongoing homeland security challenges that have been reflected in GAO products since September 11, 2001, by both mission area and issues that cut across mission areas."

The national strategy defined 6 distinct "critical mission areas" which are: (1) intelligence and warning, (2) border and transportation security, (3) domestic counterterrorism, (4) protecting critical infrastructures and key assets, (5) defending against catastrophic threats, and (6) emergency preparedness and response. The strategy then defines 43 initiatives to be undertaken under these 6 mission areas.

In this study GAO tracked these initiatives to 6 major Federal Departments that have the lead and/or are a major participant in implementing each of these 43 initiatives. Based on the FY 2005 budget these 6 agencies are spending 94% of the homeland security funding. The total budget for FY 2005 that was proposed at the time of the GAO study was \$47.386 billion. The budget allocation for those 6 agencies is:

DHS	\$27.215 billion
DOD	\$8.023 billion
HHS	\$4.276 billion
Justice	\$2.581 billion
Energy	\$1.497 billion
State	\$.955 billion
All other agencies	\$2.839 billion

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For each mission area GAO created a chart listing each initiative under the appropriate mission area. Then for each of the 6 agencies mentioned above, the chart identifies which Agency has the lead responsibility for the initiative and which agencies have a participating role for planning and/or implementing some aspect of each initiative. Then under each of these charts GAO has attempted to provide information on the status of implementing each initiative and to highlight some of the significant challenges related to implementing these initiatives. Much of this information was gleaned by GAO from the over 250 reports related to homeland security they have done since 9/11. GAO lists all of these reports by title, number, and date in the last 20 pages of this report.

In addition to the national strategy, President Bush has signed 12 Homeland Security Presidential Directives. Each of these Directives is briefly summarized in Appendix X of the report. These Directives establish national policy on various aspects of homeland security such

as the Homeland Security Advisory System (known for its varied colored warning levels), policies on combating weapons of mass destruction, defense of the food supply, etc.

This report in large part takes all the complex aspects of homeland security and aggregates the data into a concise, succinct set of charts and data that methodically lays out the homeland security strategy with enough information to tell who the players are, where they are in the implementation of the strategy, what the challenges are, and where they are going. GAO believes this report will form the baseline document for Congress and others in their assessment and oversight of homeland security. For those of you that have programs, activities, or future aspirations for engaging in the homeland security arena, it will serve as sort of a baseball scorecard. By this I mean, you can tell which agencies are the players, what initiatives (positions and activities) they are playing in, and what challenges their resources will need to be focused on in implementing these initiatives.

David Appler
FLC Washington, D.C. Representative
703-414-5026